

Recovery & Motivation

By Sgt. Steve

I wrote this article about a week after my experience practicing Stoic philosophy, while being injured at work. I had been attacked by a large pit bull, and was recovering after having multiple stitches, getting part of my ear sewn back on, and undergoing rabies vaccinations along with several other medications.

During my recovery I made it my goal to get back to work quickly and not postpone 8-hour long Stoic Resiliency course that had been on the calendar for months. This incident really made me focus on recovery and motivation. It was important to me to get my thoughts and processes on paper while I was recovering, so that they can be useful to other LEOs who are working through their own setbacks.

The Start of Recovery

I've heard this skill described in many ways: resiliency, getting back up from a fall, recovering from a setback, or getting back on track. However you say it, the skill is what is important. Setbacks and falls happen to all of us. The first thing you need to know is that it is normal and expected to experience these problems. I've never heard about anyone who achieved all their goals without sometimes losing ground.

I personally don't believe the cause of a setback matters at all. It doesn't matter if your own behavior caused it, or if you were just smacked down by Fate. The setback is in the past. You are where you are and you have work to do.

When suffering a setback, there comes a point where you have to make a choice. **"Is this moment the end of the setback?"** or do you have further to fall? You MUST identify the point where you start the recovery process. Not clearly telling yourself "I am in the processes of bouncing back" leaves room for indecision. Recovering starts with a choice.

"To wish to be well is a part of becoming well."

— SENECA

The Fuel: Motivation vs. Discipline

Once you decide to take action, you are going to need some Motivation. I do think there are some misunderstandings about how motivation works and what the best motivators are.

MOTIVATION

This is your drive. It carries you hour by hour, helping you push past reluctance. It's having a strong "why." Motivation is mostly a feeling, but grounded in knowledge. For most people, it is about 80/20 reliable. But when the tank runs dry, the grind takes over. That's when you need your reserve.

DISCIPLINE

Discipline is grit. It doesn't rely on feelings. It's doing what needs to be done, even when you don't want to. Discipline is reliable, but it's hard to build and harder to maintain. No effort should rely on discipline alone, but it should be your safety net.

*"If this were a **Fast and Furious** movie, trying to succeed without motivation would be like trying to win a race with no gas (motivation) and only a nitrous boost (discipline). Then wondering why the engine blows."*

That's why I focus on building both. Motivation as steady reliable fuel and discipline as reserve power.

The Hunter vs. The Hunted

When it comes to motivation, avoid relying on negatives (e.g., "I don't want to be injured"). Think of it like walking past a swamp. If an alligator jumps out and chases you, you'll run hard at first. But the farther you get from it, the less motivated you'll be to keep sprinting.

Positive motivators work the opposite way.

Goals like "I want to be healthy" or "I want to recover quickly" actually get stronger the closer you get to the goal. You become more driven. This is the difference between being the hunter and being the hunted.

And make no mistake, you were born to be a hunter.

When you are recovering: 1) Pick your moment, decide and set the intention. 2) Stay motivated. Find things that motivate you and focus on them. 3) Cultivate a reserve of discipline. 4) Always

keep it positive.

**Amor Fati,
Sgt. Steve**